Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Monday, June 27th, 1853.

THOMAS ROMNEY ROBINSON, D. D., President, in the Chair.

Rev. Dr. Lloyd read a paper on the Meteorology of Ireland, as deduced from observations made in 1851, under the direction of the Committee of Science.

Rev. Dr. Drummond read the conclusion of his paper (of which the following is a brief abstract) on the Achievements of Magnus Barefoot, King of Norway, and of his defeat and death in the field of Cobha, in Ireland, A. D. 1103.

On the death of Olave III., King of Norway, A. D. 1093, his son Magnus succeeded to the throne. His right, however, being disputed, he maintained it successfully by the sword. To crush the power of his enemies he made an expedition to Halland, a district about the river Gotha. Having ravaged their country and inflicted capital punishment on their leaders, he returned enriched with glory and spoil. He then determined to add to his dominions by foreign conquest; instigated partly by ambition, and partly, as was reported, by a vision, in which he was admonished to depart from Norway, and threatened with fatal consequences should he refuse. After due consultation with his nobles, a powerful armament, consisting of 160 sail, was soon prepared, and in 1096 left the shores of Norway, many of them never to return. Having laid waste the Orkneys and the Hebrides with fire and sword, but sparing Iona, he took possession of Cantire, and thence sailed to Mann, where his countrymen had formed a colony. Here he strengthened their position by walls and fortifications; and thence proceeded to Anglesea, on the shores of which island he was met by an armed force to oppose his landing. In a conflict which ensued, the leader of the enemy, the Earl of Shrewsbury, was slain. He then entered into an alliance with the Welsh, made peace with the Hebridian Scots, and in 1099 returned to his native dominions, where his presence was required to repel an invasion of the Swedes, over whom he gained a decisive victory. A treaty of peace was then concluded and ratified by his marriage with Margaret, daughter of Inge, the Swedish King. But other cares soon engrossed his thoughts. It became necessary for him to revisit his island conquests, and to aid the Welsh, who had requested him to hasten to their succour. He had it now in contemplation to make a nobler conquest than he had yet achieved, viz., the conquest of Ireland. According to the Chronicle of Mann, he announced his intention to Murchart, the Irish monarch, by sending his shoes, with orders to carry them, in token of submission, through the midst of his palace on Christmas Day. An act of such insolence excited strong indignation in the royal household. It appears, however, that instead of waging war with Murchart, he formed with him an amicable treaty, which was cemented by a contract of marriage between Sigurd, the son of Magnus, and Biadmynia, daughter of the Irish monarch. For some years prior to these events a fierce war had been desolating the fair fields of Ireland, between Murchart O'Brian of the South, and Donnel Mac Loughlan O'Nial of the North, who was regarded by many as legitimate heir to the crown. The royal residences of both potentates were demolished, and numerous battles fought without any decisive issue. In forming an alliance with the Norse King, Murchart may have thought that he would be enabled to reduce his enemies to obedience, and annihilate all rival pretensions to the throne. In 1102 the Ostmen were in arms, ready to assert their independence; and the two kings, Murchart and Magnus, marched with combined forces to besiege Dublin—*munita et opulenta civitas*. The siege was prosecuted with vigour, and the city was obliged to surrender. In the following year the adverse parties of the North and South carried on a desultory warfare, and Magnus made preparations to revisit the conquered islands, and then return to his native country. He had received a promise from Murchart that on a certain day he should receive some herds of cattle to provision the fleet; but as they did not arrive at the expected time, Magnus, who was stationed with his ships somewhere probably on the shores of Down, resolved to land with an armed force, to make a foray, and carry off whatever spoil he could find. When he had advanced a considerable distance into the country, he was suddenly attacked by the natives, and after a desperate conflict, in which many were slain, fell by the stroke of a battle-axe.

It is stated in the notes to the Chronicle of Mann that this event occurred on the 24th of August, 1103,* in the field of

---

* Eighty-nine years after the battle of Clontarf. Neither the Irish nor the Danish histories have mentioned the name of the locality where Magnus landed; nor of any other place which might enable us to trace the line of his march, or ascertain the spot on which he fell. We have only two authorities, as far as I have been able to learn, for saying that he fell in the field of Cobha, and one of them is probably altogether dependent on the other. The Annals of Boyle say he fell in the year A. D. 1104, in the field of Cobha; and Johnstone, the second authority, in an Appendix to the Chronicles of Mann, states the same fact. Mr. John O'Donovan, the learned translator of the Annals of the Four Masters, a work of which the notes are replete with historical and topographical information, places the field of Cobha in the barony of Upper Iveagh, in the county of Down, nearly midway between Newry and Loughbrickland. From the frequent mention of this field in our Irish histories, it appears to have been a favourite spot for hostings, encampments, skirmishes, and set battles; and hence, from lack of more accurate information, it might have been supposed the place most likely to have been the scene of the Norse King's last conflict. But Magnus did not fall in a set battle, nor is it probable that he could have advanced so far into the country as the field of Cobha, before he was assailed by the vigilant enemy. Moreover, as it is agreed that he was interred in or by Down Cathedral, it may not have been at any great distance thence where he fell. As the spirit of archæology has gone forth, and is pursuing various inquiries in Ireland with success, it might reward the labour of some of our antiquaries thoroughly to explore the surrounding country, with a view to the discovery of weapons of war, and other reliques of ancient times. The county of Down is rich in antiquities, cairns, cromleachs, giant's rings, circles of rude stone pillars, fosse-

Cobha, in the vicinity of Downpatrick, in the cemetery of which the body of Magnus was interred.

Torfæus (p. 146), in giving a summary of the character of Magnus, says—he was a great and magnanimous Prince; strenuous, valiant, distinguished by strength of body and energy of mind, too ambitious of power and glory, persevering in his designs, intrepid in their execution; to his country, by his levies and expeditions, burdensome; to his soldiers indulgent, and, consequently, an object of their love and admiration. When blamed by his friends for too rashly endangering his life by hazardous enterprises, he said, "life was not to be estimated nor measured by length of years, but by victory and renown."

---

encircled raths, various monuments—Pagan and Christian, monastic and military. The County Survey of Down says that the Danes penetrated into the country as far as Armagh, and that the raths are commonly known by the name of Danish forts. Certain golden ornaments have also been discovered from time to time, and among them a beautiful crescent, which appears by the description of it to be like one of those in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy.

In vol. vi. p. 52, of "NOTES AND QUERIES," there is a notice of the burial-place of Magnus, by John W. Hanna, of Downpatrick. Having heard that M. Worsaae, in a recent visit to Ireland, had pointed out a place at some distance from the cathedral of that town, where Magnus was interred, he was anxious to find the spot, but could hear of no tradition concerning it, nor of any place named *Slat Manus.* He seems to have entertained a hope that M. Worsaae might know of some Danish map or history mentioning the particular locality, but without success.

"*Magh Cobha*, the plain of Eochaidh Cobha, the ancestor of the tribe called Ui Eathach Cobha, who were seated in the present baronies of Upper and Lower Iveagh," in the county of Down.—See *O'Flaherty*, *Ogygia*, part iii. c. 78. The Four Masters, and from them, Colgan, have erred in placing this plain in Tyrone . . . . The older writers place in it the monastery of Druim Mor (Dromore), and the church of Domh-mach Mor Muighe Cobha, which is unquestionably the present "Donaghmore" (in Upper Iveagh), "nearly midway between Newry and Loughbrickland."

The curious reader may see more on this topic by referring to the note, pp. 165, 166, in Mr. John O'Donovan's translation of *Leabhar na g-Ceart*, i. e. the *Book of Rights.*

In stature, he was tall and portly, and altogether worthy to be classed with the greatest and most memorable of kings: yes, it may be added, of warrior kings ambitious of conquest, and who seek for glory, not in the cultivation of the arts of peace, in the moral and intellectual improvement of their species, but in the clash of arms; in the "pomp, pride, and circumstance" of war. Of Magnus it may truly be said, that he was a scourge to his race, that his daring projects were fraught with misery and ruin to thousands of his countrymen as well as to himself. To him how justly may be applied the reflections of a great moralist on "the vanity of human wishes,"* as exemplified in the inglorious termination of another Scandinavian prince's career in a subsequent age!

> "Did no subverted empire mark his end?
> *Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?*
> Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
> His fall was destined to a barren strand,
> A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
> He left a name at which the world grew pale,
> To point a moral, or adorn a tale."

Dr. Aquilla Smith read a notice of Irish Tradesmen's Tokens, intended as an Addenda to his List published in the Proceedings, vol. iv. Appendix, p. xxvii.

Dr. Lyons read a further notice of his researches on Histolysis.

"Since the date of my former communication I have been engaged with some further researches on Histolysis, which, while they confirm generally the results I had then arrived at, have led me to the observation of phenomena still more complicated and more highly interesting. The deposit and maturation of the ova of insects, and the development of various forms of animalcules in decaying structures, are phenomena quite familiar to all observers, and it will be remembered that I noted their occurrence in the second division of the Histolytic Scale. I have in some instances witnessed the abundant development of monads and vibrios as early as the second day, and under certain circumstances they exist in parts still in connexion with the living organism. As the investigation of these living forms did not appear to come directly within the scope of my researches, I took no further notice of them than briefly to assign them their proper place on the scale. In prosecuting further researches, however, I have observed, what no doubt ought to have presented itself to my mind in the first instance, namely, that these animalcules become an element of complexity, and also of great additional interest in the study of the general process of Histolysis, not, as might be supposed, from the possibility of their being confounded with the debris of the tissues under investigation, but from the fact that being themselves subject to the all-pervading law of mortality, when they have sported their hour on the stage they in their turn die, and then undergo putrefactive changes, and mingle their remains with the other decaying elements around them. I have also observed the occurrence of certain microscopic forms of vegetation; protophyta of the simplest kind, such as very minute cells both isolated and aggregated, vegetable filaments, and certain algal forms, being developed in considerable quantities. Under favourable conditions of light I have been enabled in almost all instances to detect a faint greenish colour in all these vegetable forms; with sulphuric acid, and a solution of iodine in iodide of potassium, they usually assume a yellowish tinge, their internal appearances become much more readily seen, and they are themselves distinguishable with great facility from the surrounding elements. At a further stage it is probable these vegetable elements likewise undergo decay.

---

* Johnson's Imitation of the 10th Satire of Juvenal.

"These observations add a new interest to the study of Histolysis, and also throw light on some points on which I was hitherto doubtful. The extent to which animalcules of the classes Monadina and Vibrionia become developed is almost incredible,—thousands of them will be found to cover the field in specimens examined from most different sources; they are present at very early periods, probably within twenty-four hours in some cases, and in the oldest rotting tissues which I have examined I have discovered them. I may, however, remark that there are some intermediate stages which I cannot as yet in any way define, at which their development ceases, no trace of animalcule motion being observable.

"Besides the larva of insects familiar to all observers, certain forms of articulata likewise present themselves. I have as yet met with only a form of annelida, most nearly (as I believe) allied to *Polia siphunculus*, which is visible to the naked eye, and under the microscope exhibits a very beautiful internal structure. I have observed two varieties, differing slightly in size and some other particulars; they appear to occur indifferently in all situations.

"In the *debris* of these animalcules, when dead, and undergoing histolytic changes, will be found the nucleated bodies I before described,* as 'peculiar elements.' To recognise these and other elements thus liberated, requires that the living animalcule forms should be carefully studied, and this becomes therefore a necessary preliminary step in the general study of Histolysis, which will be considered at length in its proper place. In the construction of the Histolytic Scale, therefore, in order properly to represent the actual succession of phenomena it will be necessary to insert an ascending line to indicate the period of development, and the growth of vegetable and animalcule forms; and to indicate their subsequent decay and dissolution a second line must be drawn from the summit of the first to the first grade of the Histolytic Scale, showing that these elements now fall in with the general process of decay.

---

* Proceedings, *ante*, p. 456.

" These phenomena, no doubt, much complicate the general process ; but yet we can follow out the morphic changes of the original tissues in their passage downwards to decay and dissolution, as the practised eye soon learns to detect them, and by preparatory study we are enabled to recognise all forms of extraneous origin. For a long period the original structures retain distinctive characteristics, a circumstance of practical importance, as I have before observed. In some tissues the series of changes is very simple, and may be readily followed throughout : we have an example in adipose tissue, which may be detailed by way of illustration.

"*Adipose Tissue.*—This substance is capable of being recognised by the microscope after a very long time, and when to the naked sight it has not only lost all its usual physical characters, but has assumed a charred and blackened appearance. I have in my possession a specimen of fatty tissue on a glass side, and uncovered, for more than a year and a half, and yet it shows the cellular structure perfectly. In a specimen almost quite black, taken from textures after seven months' putrefaction, and wholly undistinguishable by ordinary physical examination, I have recognised distinctly several groups of fat cells. These cells had all undergone a certain amount of change, for instead of being clear and transparent, they presented finely granular contents, with occasionally a few larger corpuscles. This granular infiltration appears to me the first change which takes place in the fat cell, and I consider it to be owing to the union of its originally homogeneous oily contents with some form of albuminous compound liberated in the histolysis of surrounding tissues, and which has entered the cell-wall by endosmose. In other fat cells a still further change is indicated, their interior being filled with long delicate crystals, arranged in stellate masses, the centre of the stella corresponding nearly with the centre of the cell, the cell wall being still distinctly visible ; in other instances this membrane appears to have given way, and the masses of crystals then lie free on the field. Numerous single crystals, apparently liberated from such masses, may be observed floating about. These I regard as crystals of the fatty acids, and as forming the last morphic stage of the Histolytic process in the adipose tissue; the further dilysis of the elements of the crystals only awaits the operation of the necessary chemical and physical forces, which we may conceive to be called into play in a variety of ways. This particular observation of the order of morphic changes, as well as others which I have made, is highly important, as it shows the possibility of Histolysis or morphic dissolution being brought about without the agency of vegetable or animalcule life, thus proving, as I conceive, the independence of the series of changes, and its claims to be considered as a distinct substantive process, taking place in obedience to certain physical laws, and not effected by vegetable and animalcule organisms, the development of which I regard as only a subjective, non-essential phenomenon.

" It is my intention to follow out the histolytic changes as far as I shall be able in the several organs, tissues, and fluids, and I am now engaged with further inquiries on the subject. I may remark that the observation of the several phases of the process presents considerable difficulties, as almost every tissue has certain histolytic peculiarities, and the changes do not progress uniformly in all; thus, in a specimen of cerebral substance of the same date as the structures already noticed, I find that the changes have proceeded to such an extent that without preparatory studies of the phenomena presented in this substance, at earlier periods in the process of its disintegration the appearances are quite unintelligible. I will only further add, that I have noticed very marked and characteristic differences in the smells emitted by different tissues undergoing putrefaction. I *have already met with four* very distinct and characteristic varieties of smells, and it is highly probable that this observation may be utilized."